Skills Nova Scotia
Action Plan 2005–2006

NOVA SCOTIA

105-05623/

Skills Nova Scotia
Action Plan 2005–2006

All activities highlighted have been successful due to partnerships between government, business, industry, labour, training and education institutions, and community. This year, we are identifying our partners with each activity. We have made every effort to reference all partners in this document. If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at skills@gov.ns.ca.

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Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Main entry under title.

Skills Nova Scotia action plan 2004–2005 / Nova Scotia. Department of Education. Skills and Learning Branch.

ISBN: 0-88871-957-4

1. Labor market - Nova Scotia. 2. Employees - Training of - Nova Scotia. 3. Occupational training - Nova Scotia I. Nova Scotia. Department of Education. Skills and Learning Branch.
331.12042–dc22 2005

Message from the Premier

Office of
the Premier

The Province of Nova Scotia is creating a world-class workforce ready to meet the demands of today and the promise of tomorrow. The *Skills Nova Scotia Action Plan 2005–2006* demonstrates how we work with our partners to advance initiatives that improve the province's capacity to compete in a global marketplace and help Nova Scotians advance in the workforce.

Nova Scotia is experiencing many trends that are changing the makeup of our population. Baby boomers are aging, the birth rate is falling, and a significant number of young people are leaving. Those changes present both challenges and opportunities. Identifying and dealing with them in positive and innovative ways is what Skills Nova Scotia is all about. The actions we are taking today will help us ensure the future social and economic prosperity of the province.

With Skills Nova Scotia, we are meeting the needs of our increasingly sophisticated labour market, providing better labour market access and supports to Nova Scotians, and strengthening our system of lifelong learning.

We are also continuing our efforts with the federal government to advance the joint federal/provincial skills and learning priorities. By implementing initiatives through the Canada Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework, Canada/Nova Scotia Innovations Team, Canada/Nova Scotia Skill Development Agreement, Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, and the Labour Market Development Agreement for Persons with Disabilities, we are helping Nova Scotians attain the skills and knowledge they need for life and work.

In collaboration with business, industry, labour, education and training providers, communities, and the federal government, we are putting the strategic initiatives in place to support the framework of our future.

We are building on the solid foundation of past successes to create a strong workforce and bright future for all Nova Scotians.

John Hamm

John F. Hamm
Premier of Nova Scotia

Message from the Minister of Education

Office of
the Minister
of Education

The *Skills Nova Scotia: Action Plan 2005–2006* highlights provincial programs, services and strategic initiatives to build Nova Scotia's workforce and contribute to a thriving economy. The document brings together the initiatives of all government departments to address today's labour market challenges and prepare for the social and economic changes of the future.

The Department of Education is proud to lead the Skills Nova Scotia efforts and initiatives. Its activities include developing labour market information research and products, co-operative education opportunities for post-secondary students, and industry specific education and training initiatives that respond to immediate skill shortages.

Nova Scotia has experienced significant changes since the *Skills Nova Scotia Framework* was launched in 2002. The global market place has expanded, technology and innovation continue to influence the education requirements for work, and our population is several years older. As a result, we are planning to undertake a review of the *Skills Nova Scotia Framework* with our partners.

The assessment is planned for fall 2005, and the results will be used to revise the *Framework* and establish a plan for the next three years of Skills Nova Scotia.

Our work is paying off, with more Nova Scotians getting jobs in skilled trades, stronger partnerships with business and industry, and a broader range of education and training options in the province. This success would not be possible without the support of our partners in government, business, industry, training and educational institutions and the community. Skills Nova Scotia is truly a collaborative effort—with significant results.

Our first three years have laid a firm foundation from which we can continue to put pieces in place to build a strong workforce and bright future for Nova Scotia.

Jamie Muir
Minister of Education

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Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Meet the skill needs of Nova Scotia's labour market

Objectives

1. Research, develop, and distribute high-quality labour market information
2. Co-ordinate targeted initiatives that satisfy emerging skill needs
3. Work to enhance and improve the apprenticeship system in Nova Scotia
4. Improve mobility of skilled workers within Canada
5. Improve Nova Scotia's competitive edge in attracting and retaining highly skilled international workers
6. Design and implement labour policy to promote safe and healthy work environments, fair employment standards, and stable labour-management relations
7. Improve opportunities for youth to develop the leadership skills required for successful labour market participation

Goal 2: Provide better labour market access and supports to Nova Scotians

Objectives

1. Provide career- and employment-related services to Nova Scotians to help them develop their skills and find sustainable jobs
2. Assist low-income Nova Scotians, including income assistance recipients, to access education and training
3. Promote equity, fairness, and diversity throughout labour market programs and services offered in Nova Scotia
4. Develop and implement prior learning assessment and recognition processes and tools

Goal 3: Strengthen Nova Scotia's system of lifelong learning opportunities

Objectives

1. Increase the opportunities for Nova Scotia's children to develop a curiosity for learning and an ability to learn before entering Nova Scotia's education system
2. Improve the core skills of children in Nova Scotia's education system
3. Expand co-operative and work experience opportunities for students in Nova Scotia's secondary education system
4. Increase the opportunities for Nova Scotians to access adult basic education
5. Make education and training more relevant to the emerging skill needs of the learners and employers
6. Increase the post-secondary education and training system's capacity to respond to emerging labour market needs
7. Promote lifelong learning through the development of a learning culture

Introduction

Nova Scotia faces a number of labour market challenges. Globalization continues to increase the amount of competition in the marketplace and, therefore, the productivity requirements necessary to be competitive. Rapid changes in technology and work processes have increased certification requirements and the rate at which they must be updated. An aging population of baby boomers, negative birthrate, and out-migration of youth have created an older workforce. These trends have exacerbated the imbalance between the supply and demand of skilled workers.

More than ever before, it is important for the province to work with its partners and to co-ordinate its efforts to identify and respond to these challenges with policies, programs, and initiatives that will build a strong workforce and bright future for all Nova Scotians.

The Skills Nova Scotia Framework was developed in 2002 to guide the province's labour force skill development efforts. It outlines a number of broad goals and objectives that the province strives to achieve each year.

The *Skills Nova Scotia Action Plan 2005–2006* highlights a number of activities that the province is undertaking this fiscal year through the efforts of many of the departments, offices, and agencies of government.

This year, for the first time, the action plan identifies the lead department, office, or agency responsible for implementing each activity. Key partners are identified as well. This information has been included to provide Nova Scotians with a better sense of the co-ordinated efforts that make Skills Nova Scotia work.

Highlights in 2005–2006

Government, employers, unions, education and training providers, non-profit organizations, communities, and Nova Scotians all have a role to play in the development of a skilled and knowledgeable workforce. Our capacity to build on past successes continues to hinge upon collaborative efforts to identify and meet skills needs, provide labour market supports and access, enhance our system of lifelong learning, work together with the federal government, review our priorities, and set the course for the future.

Highlights of labour force skill development activities to be undertaken in 2005–2006 include the following:

Identifying and Meeting the Skill Needs of the Labour Market

Identifying and meeting the skill needs of the labour market requires a collaborative effort on the part of all the Skills Nova Scotia partners to develop timely, reliable labour market information (LMI), respond to immediate skill needs, and develop strategic approaches to meet long-term labour force skill requirements.

In 2005–2006, a number of initiatives are being undertaken to improve the province's capacity to identify current and future skill requirements of the labour market. They include enhancing the Canadian Occupational Projection System process; developing a new and improved version of *Career Options*, a career information resource; identifying areas at risk for skill shortages to inform human resources planning for the public service; and initiating a research study to determine the socio-economic implications of an aging workforce.

The province is also responding where immediate skill needs have been identified within the health care system by attracting and retaining nurses and medical laboratory technologists with incentives such as bursary programs. Projected skill needs are being identified through direct contact with employers and through continued partnerships with industry associations such as the Aerospace and Defence Industries Association of Nova Scotia (ADIANS). The focus of these initiatives is to help industry sectors address a range of workforce attraction, retention, and skill development issues.

Providing Better Labour Market Access and Supports

A well-balanced labour force not only enriches the labour market and the economy; it is also necessary to meet that immediate and projected skill needs of the labour market. Policies and practices that support all Nova Scotians in their education, training, and employment efforts must be encouraged and fostered in order to develop the skilled and knowledgeable workforce required to keep the province competitive in the global environment.

In 2005–2006, a number of initiatives including One Journey - Work and Learn, Employment Assistance for Persons with Disabilities, and the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills Development Agreement will continue to help Nova Scotians get the education and training they need to attain employment. In addition, the province encourages a strategic approach to labour market skill development opportunities and challenges by implementing Nova Scotia's Immigration Strategy, releasing the Youth Employment and Skills Development Strategy, and launching a Positive Aging Strategy.

Strengthening Nova Scotia's System of Lifelong Learning

The development of a lifelong learning culture is integral to the success of Skills Nova Scotia. Access to learning at home, at work, and in the community is necessary to ensure that Nova Scotians can acquire the skills and knowledge they need to lead healthy and productive lives.

In 2005–2006, a number of initiatives are being implemented to support learning throughout all stages of life. The Math Strategy, Active Readers, and Writers in Action will help public school students develop skills that are foundational to lifelong learning. Co-operative employment placements through the Student Employment Program will provide students with opportunities to gain work skills and experience, and the development of Youth Apprenticeship initiatives will create new opportunities. The Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning continues to offer literacy and high school-level programs. The Workplace Education initiative continues to support employers, unions, and workers by offering essential skills education programs to staff on site.

Working Together with the Federal Government

The federal government continues to be an important partner in developing a strong labour force. The province and the federal government are working toward common skills and learning goals through the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework, Canada/Nova Scotia Innovations Team, and Forum of Labour Market Ministers. Agreements such as the Canada/Nova Scotia Skill Development Agreement, Canada/Nova Scotia Labour Market Development Agreement, Canada/Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities, and Early Childhood Development Initiative all support our shared priorities. A number of activities highlighted in this action plan are implemented in partnership with the federal government through these joint planning mechanisms and agreements.

Reviewing Our Priorities and Setting the Course for the Future

It has been four years since the launch of the Skills Nova Scotia Framework and the first action plan. The province and its partners have accomplished a lot in that time, including initiating the Nova Scotia Community College expansion, creating Nova Scotia's Immigration Strategy and Office of Immigration, and signing the memorandum of understanding with universities. It is time to review our priorities and set the course for the future.

In the fall of 2005, the province will initiate a review of the Skills Nova Scotia Framework to validate the goals and objectives and develop a three-year plan with clear deliverables that advance the overall vision of Skills Nova Scotia. The review process will include an on line release of a Skills Nova Scotia Framework discussion paper and targeted stakeholder consultations.

2005–2006 Action Plan

Goal 1: Meet the skill needs of Nova Scotia's Labour Market

The capacity to respond to emerging skill needs will be the key component of Nova Scotia's competitiveness. The more adaptive, responsive, and flexible that our labour force and skills development practices become, the more competitive Nova Scotia's labour market will be.

Objective 1: Research, develop, and distribute high-quality labour market information

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- advising on the development of follow-up surveys for students who have graduated from Nova Scotia Community College and from Nova Scotia universities to determine their employment pathways, success, and satisfaction (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities and Nova Scotia Community College)
- supporting the expansion of the Nova Scotia Community College graduate follow-up survey to create a better understanding of the learning and employment pathways of apprenticeship students and Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning students (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- updating and releasing the 2005 *Nova Scotia Business Climate Index*, a key measure that compares Nova Scotia's business climate to other Canadian jurisdictions (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Various partners across government)
- updating statistical publications on women in the labour market (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Black Educators Association)
- continuing to enhance data quality and collection in support of the Atlantic Advisory Council on Health Human Resources regional study (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Department of Education, educational institutions, professional associations)
- conducting employee surveys that will provide metrics for strategic human resource planning and allow the provincial government to monitor employee satisfaction and commitment (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- participating on the Labour Market Information Committee under the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework to develop such projects as a single point of entry portal for web-based LMI in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Office of Economic Development, Department of Finance, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Industry Canada, Nova Scotia Business Inc., Department of Community Services, Department of Environment and Labour, Nova Scotia Community College)

- continuing to support the Greater Halifax Partnership in its Smart Halifax Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) project and assessing practices for engaging employers to address human resource issues (**Partners:** Office of Economic Development, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Department of Education)
- working with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and a consultant to conduct an evaluation of the preliminary results of the Greater Halifax Partnership Smart BRE project and to address issues identified through the evaluation (**Lead:** Department of Education, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency; **Partners:** Office of Economic Development, Human Resources Skills and Development Canada, Nova Scotia Community College)
- continuing to support the work of the Atlantic Apprenticeship Council related to the national Construction Sector Council Labour Market Information project and outcomes of the Atlantic Construction Symposium (**Partners:** Department of Education, Construction Association of Nova Scotia, other industry representation)
- developing labour market information and career information for parents through the Canadian Career Information Partnership (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Department of Community Services)
- participating in the development of survey tools to collect labour market information from groups such as employers, sector councils, industry associations, labour organizations, and regional development agencies (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Department of Community Services, Office of Economic Development, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Nova Scotia Community College, business, industry, labour)

New Actions

- implement a comprehensive Brand Nova Scotia strategy that includes targeting expatriate Nova Scotians to return to Nova Scotia to live, work, invest, and do business (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Various provincial departments)
- disseminate *In The Picture ... a Future with Women in Trades, Science and Technology: Volumes 1 and 2* (**Lead:** Hypatia Association, Women for Economic Equality Society (WEE); **Partner:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- release statistical information on the economic situation of women with disabilities (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- publish and distribute the first series of 13 *Promising Occupations* pamphlets for students and parents (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, sectoral partners, intergovernmental partners)
- publish a comprehensive mathematics *Pathways* poster-map and distribute to schools for mathematics classrooms, and continue the development of additional *Pathways* poster-maps (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, sectoral partners, intergovernmental partners)

- work with provincial government partners, the federal government, business, and labour to better understand current and future skills needs in the province to help target our immigration strategy to fill these needs (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partners:** Department of Education, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- develop information resources that will encourage students to consider various careers and entrepreneurial opportunities in our vibrant cultural sector (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, sectoral partners, intergovernmental partners)
- analyse statistical data to define areas at risk for skill shortages in the public service and to inform human resources planning in government departments (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- participate in the development of an inter-jurisdictional public sector engagement model index that will guide a common set of questions for use in employee surveys across provinces (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- promote access to career information from sector councils via the National Integrated Delivery System project (**Lead:** Department of Education, Nova Scotia Career Development Association; **Partners:** Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, sector councils)
- provide input to the Petroleum Human Resources Council of the Canada Alignment Strategy project, which is intended to narrow the gap between what education and training institutions currently provide and what knowledge and skills oil and gas employers seek in new employees (**Lead:** Department of Energy; **Partner:** Petroleum Human Resources Council of Canada)
- engage agriculture and fishing industry participation in discussion of issues, including labour market challenges, that are affecting the development and success of their business, to highlight barriers and challenges that affect growth and to consider opportunities for future development through a series of roundtable sessions across the province (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries)
- work with and support the Nova Scotia Association of Regional Development Authorities (NSARDA) in gathering demand-side labour market information in the regions (**Partners:** Department of Education, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Office of Economic Development, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)
- work with the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework - Labour Market Information Task Team to identify priority sectors, industries, and occupations about which better supply and demand information is needed and undertake work to address these needs (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency; **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Office of Economic Development, Department of Finance, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Industry Canada, Nova Scotia Business Inc., Department of Community Services, Department of Environment and Labour, Nova Scotia Community College, Department of Education)
- co-ordinate a research project to outline the economic and social policy implications of Nova Scotia's changing demographic situation (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Labour Force Planning Committee, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)

- evaluate, through the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework - Labour Market Information Task Team, the skills inventory process and results and identify means by which the skills inventories can be developed as effective labour market information resources (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Office of Economic Development, Department of Finance, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Industry Canada, Nova Scotia Business Inc., Department of Community Services, Department of Environment and Labour, Nova Scotia Community College)
- conduct a graduate follow-up survey for students enrolled in post-secondary training at registered private career colleges in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** Registered private career colleges)
- participate in planning an Atlantic Provinces Information Technology Sector Symposium to be held in 2005 (**Lead:** Department of Education **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Council of Atlantic Premiers, Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium)

Objective 2: Co-ordinate targeted initiatives that satisfy emerging skill needs

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- working with stakeholders to develop a co-ordinated strategy for recruitment and retention of women in science, trades, and technology occupations (**Lead:** Women in Science, Trades and Technology Working Group; **Partners:** Hypatia Association, Women for Economic Equality Society, Department of Education, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Nova Scotia Community College)
- working with the other provinces and territories through the Forum of Labour Market Ministers to advance labour market policy discussions with the federal government and to address priority labour market issues in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Department of Intergovernmental Affairs)
- collaborating with the federal government through the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework to develop targeted initiatives at the local level to advance the following common priorities: labour market attachment, labour market information, workplace skills and education, and youth employment (**Lead:** Department of Education, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada; **Partners:** Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Office of Economic Development, Department of Community Services, Industry Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Department of Environment and Labour, community organizations)
- working through the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework - Workplace Skills and Education Task Team to support activities that enhance the human resource planning capacity of small and medium employers (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development, Department of Education, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency; **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- convening a Workforce Development Planning Forum with the Skills Nova Scotia partners to identify common labour force skill development challenges and to create partnered solutions (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Office of Economic Development, Department of Community Services, industry organizations, Department of Environment and Labour)

- supporting business and industry to identify and respond to specific labour market skill development challenges (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** Industry organizations)
- continuing to support workforce development initiatives to provide career counselling, employment support, and essential skills training (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia, sector councils, sector organizations, Nova Scotia Partners Committee, Nova Scotia workplaces, Department of Environment and Labour)
- partnering with the Aerospace and Defence Industries Association of Nova Scotia (ADIANS) to implement its mandate to provide a sector-wide human resource strategy to address workforce attraction, retention, and skill development issues (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Aerospace and Defence Industries Association of Nova Scotia)
- supporting the implementation of the summer employment program for under-represented groups within the Maritime Forces Atlantic Civilian Workforce Renewal Strategy, which aims to attract, train, and replace the civilian workforce who will retire in the next decade (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College's Career and Transition Services, Maritime Forces Atlantic)
- continuing to support older workers, in partnership with the federal government, through the Older Worker Pilot Project, which is designed to reintegrate displaced older workers into sustainable employment or maintain employment of older workers threatened with displacement (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, career resource centres, Acadia Centre for Small Business and Entrepreneurship)
- continuing to lead a Sector Engagement Program to improve communication with industry sector councils and sector-like organizations and to identify areas for collaboration and partnership around common labour market development goals (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Industry organizations, industry sector councils, employers)
- continuing to support the Skills Canada - Nova Scotia Energy Youth Quest initiative (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Department of Energy)
- continuing to implement the Nova Scotia Nursing Strategy by
  - supporting practising nurses—utilizing the TeleHealth Network, orientation programs, continuing education courses, and the RN Professional Development Centre
  - supporting student nurses—providing the co-operative education program for third year Bachelor of Nursing students who have 10 weeks of paid employment between June and August
  - enhancing recruitment by supplying relocation allowances and re-entry programs for LPNs and RNs, maintaining the provincial recruitment website, and increasing the number of nurse training seats and bursary programs
  - supporting workforce deployment and utilization—awarding nursing grants, conducting leadership conferences, and supporting the Environment Collaborative Program of the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia

  (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Provincial Nursing Network, employers)

- training 50 medical laboratory technologists through a joint customized program between the Nova Scotia Community College and the New Brunswick Community College, which ensures that each lab technologist will work in Nova Scotia for two years following graduation *in* exchange for an $8000 bursary (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Provincial Nursing Network, Nova Scotia Community College, New Brunswick Community College, employers)
- developing plans to establish a medical laboratory technologist training program in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Provincial Nursing Network, Department of Education, employers, Nova Scotia Community College)
- identifying the capacity of the provincial civil service to provide services in French and developing training programs to address skills needs (**Lead:** Office of Acadian Affairs; **Partners:** 14 provincial departments and offices)
- developing and providing French language training for Nova Scotia government employees (**Lead:** Office of Acadian Affairs, Public Service Commission)
- investing in skill development workshops and other professional development opportunities in various artistic disciplines and cultural activities (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing ongoing administrative support to the Nova Scotia Talent Trust, which provides financial assistance to Nova Scotians who demonstrate potential and commitment to become recognized artists in their chosen fields (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- investing in export marketing skills development initiatives (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- offering skill development and enhancement courses through the Nova Scotia Centre for Craft and Design (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing investment, through the Anchor Organizations Program, to cultural organizations that actively help to develop Nova Scotia's cultural sector and offer training or support services to individuals in the cultural sector (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing investment to the Tourism Human Resource Council to facilitate activities that will enhance the tourism industry's ability to develop a strong workforce and promote participation in programs such as national certifications, career awareness, and service excellence (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- assisting and developing training programs for provincial and regional Visitor Information Centre staff (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing investment and facilitating training programs for Nova Scotia's tourism industry operators through the Best Business Practices Mission (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing investment for tourism business organizations, for skill development workshops, and for other professional development opportunities to enhance their market-readiness (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- working with the Nova Scotia Community College Program Advisory Committee to identify and plan for new programs to meet changing skill needs in Nova Scotia industries and sectors (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)

- partnering with the Offshore-Onshore Technologies Association of Nova Scotia and Nova Scotia Community College to expand the specialized welding training to offshore fabrication workers with $421,500 from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, which will allow local welders to raise their competencies to international standards and allow Atlantic companies to become more competitive when bidding globally on offshore fabrication projects (**Partners:** Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Offshore-Onshore Technologies Association of Nova Scotia, Department of Education, Nova Scotia Community College)
- continuing to assist industries to respond to human resource issues through trade designations or compulsory trade designations (**Lead:** Department of Education)

New Actions

- initiate a pilot project involving 40 women at two Nova Scotia Community College pilot sites to expose women to different science, trades, and technology occupations and support them through the necessary training and on-the-job mentoring and support (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Hypatia Association; **Partners:** Department of Education, Women for Economic Equality Society, Nova Scotia Community College)
- support the implementation of CEO roundtables to better understand and address workforce-related issues as identified by Nova Scotia businesses (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- award new scholarships that will target energy-related trades and technology programs at the Nova Scotia Community College; business, sciences, and engineering programs at Nova Scotia universities; and master's-level programs in business, earth sciences, and engineering at Nova Scotia universities (**Lead:** Department of Energy; **Partner:** Pengrowth Corporation)
- develop natural resources strategies focussing on forests, provincial parks, minerals, and bio-diversity that will address topics such as sustainable natural resource management, the conservation of a healthy natural environment, and current and new economic opportunities within the strategy resource areas. Once the strategies are completed they will assist in determining how government can work with the private sector to ensure a future supply of labour and the skills needs for the resource sectors (**Lead:** Department of Natural Resources; **Partners:** Office of Economic Development, Department of Energy, Department of Environment and Labour, Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, Department of Fisheries and Agriculture, Office of Health Promotion)
- initiate recruitment of 25 additional medical laboratory technologist students for a third program (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Provincial Nursing Network, employers)
- provide opportunities, tools, and resources for French language skills maintenance and growth in the public service (**Lead:** Office of Acadian Affairs)
- collaborate with the Federal Council of Nova Scotia to provide French language training to Nova Scotia government employees as required (**Lead:** Office of Acadian Affairs)
- launch a recruitment video at high schools, post-secondary institutions, career fairs, and professional associations and on the government website to feature exciting career opportunities in the provincial public service (**Lead:** Public Service Commission, **Partners:** All government departments)
- release a new comprehensive corporate human resource plan, which includes as a goal for the provincial government to become a preferred employer (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)

- partner with Nova Scotia Community College in the development of a program, to be delivered at the Composites Atlantic Mill Cove facility, to attract high-caliber students who will enrol in technology programs directly aligned with the company's needs and upon graduation, move directly to Composites Atlantic, thereby augmenting the company's workforce by over 100 new employees over the next three years (**Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Composites Atlantic, Department of Education)
- work with the Michelin Waterville and Bridgewater plants and Nova Scotia Community College to address a skills gap with regard to maintenance technicians; Michelin has launched a strategy to recruit maintenance technicians from its production staff, and the community college will deliver the technical program required to move selected production workers into technical positions in the maintenance department (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Michelin)

Objective 3: Work to enhance and improve the apprenticeship system in Nova Scotia

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- reviewing and revising apprenticeship training standards (**Lead:** Department of Education (**Partners:** Apprenticeship offices in Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island)
- optimizing the annual technical training capacity for active apprentices (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- partnering with education, business, labour, and sector councils to implement a Youth Apprenticeship progra (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Sector councils, Nova Scotia Community College, boards of education, industry)
- undertaking a review of apprenticeship trade regulations (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Provincial Apprenticeship Board, industry representatives)
- developing opportunities for upgrading and enhancement training for trade practitioners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Industry and labour)
- facilitating joint marketing initiatives with Skills Canada-Nova Scotia to promote careers in the skilled trades and technologies (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Skills Canada-Nova Scotia)
- distributing the results of the provincial Youth Decision Survey related to occupations in the skilled trades and technologies (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Communications Nova Scotia)
- implementing a comprehensive marketing strategy for the Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development division and the Apprenticeship Board (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Board, Skills Canada-Nova Scotia, Communications Nova Scotia)
- implementing a model for mentor/coach training for journeypersons (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Boatbuilders Association, Nova Scotia Community College)

- establishing components of a Blue Seal (post-journeyperson) business skills program (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Acadian Centre for Small Business and Entrepreneurship)
- reviewing the Apprenticeship program delivery model options (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- working towards re-establishing hands-on learning experiences at Nova Scotia Community College in the apprenticeship programs, making investments in Plumber, Steamfitter, and Sheet Metal programs this year (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)

Objective 4: Improve mobility of skilled workers within Canada

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- implementing the labour mobility chapter of the obligations in the Agreement on Internal Trade to reduce or remove barriers to the movement of workers within Canada, thereby making it easier for skilled workers to choose where they live and work (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Forum of Labour Market Ministers, professional associations)
- creating and implementing a strategic work plan to improve provincial labour mobility awareness and compliance (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- enhancing the National Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program for the trades in partnership with business, industry, and labour (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Apprenticeship offices across Canada, industry, Department of Environment and Labour)
- creating and revising Atlantic Apprenticeship Training Standards to increase labour mobility for apprentices and trades practitioners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Apprenticeship offices in Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island)
- communicating a federal-provincial consensus recommendation to offshore petroleum boards that would enable vessels to provide local employment preferences in a less disruptive manner; this should provide added economic, safety, and career advantages for Atlantic Canadians (**Lead:** Department of Energy; **Partners:** Atlantic provinces, Government of Canada, offshore industry)
- encouraging and supporting the development of articulation agreements between the Nova Scotia Community College and the universities to allow students to receive credit for relevant courses and diplomas taken at other institutions, thus reducing overall costs for students (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

New Actions

- participate in Atlantic Metropolis Centre workshops on topics such as accreditation and qualifications of immigrant women (**Lead:** Atlantic Metropolis Centre; **Partners:** Various partners including Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- level the Atlantic training standards to enhance mobility for apprentices and provide shared training options (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Apprenticeship offices in Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island)
- support the articulation agreements between the Nova Scotia Community College and Mount Saint Vincent University, which allows students to get two years' credit towards a degree from their two-year diploma in business administration and human services (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Mount Saint Vincent University, Nova Scotia Community College)

Objective 5: Improve Nova Scotia's competitive edge in attracting and retaining highly skilled international workers

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- working with the Atlantic Metropolis Centre Gender Domain to support the recruitment and retention of women immigrants in Nova Scotia's labour force (**Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, various others)
- pursuing opportunities to attract industry capital investment/new producers and to assist in sustaining and further developing our agricultural industry (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries)
- continuing the collaborative project with the Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University in China that will bring a contingent of 40–50 students to the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in September 2005 (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Nova Scotia Agricultural College; **Partners:** Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University)
- continuing to support the English in the Workplace Program that provides customized language training to employed immigrants (**Partners:** Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre, Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association, Department of Education)
- developing partnerships between the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia, RX Professional Development Centre, and the Halifax Learning Centre to apply for funding for initiatives that will support the assessment and the recognition of credentials of international medical graduates (IMGs) and internationally educated health professionals (IEHPs) in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Health **Partners:** Health Canada, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia, educational providers)
- continuing the policy development and approval process for the Multiculturalism Policy by working with an interdepartmental forum and external stakeholders (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- continuing to promote the Nova Scotia Nominee Program, Skilled Worker Stream, as a way of filling immediate skills shortages with immigrants who have unique skills sets (**Lead:** Office of Immigration)

- continuing to support international learning opportunities for Nova Scotia Community College students (**Partners:** EduNova, Office of Economic Development, Nova Scotia Community College, Department of Education, school boards, private sector partners)
- continuing to support English as a Second Language (ESL) training programs (**Lead:** Office of Immigration)
- partnering with the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association on phase two of the Enhanced Language Training Project: Nova Scotia Language Pathways (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partner:** Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association)

New Actions

- deliver a panel presentation at an International Metropolis conference on women immigrants and their labour force situation in Nova Scotia (**Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women and others)
- participate in Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency's Partners Forum to discuss shared priorities such as women immigrants and their participation in the labour force (**Lead:** Atlantic Metropolis Centre; **Partners:** Multi-partners including Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- follow up on the recommendations made during the immigration strategy consultations to ensure the inclusion of immigrant women in the strategy's implementation (**Lead:** Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Office of Economic Development, Department of Community Services, Department of Health, Office of Immigration)
- develop qualifications for additional Nominee Program streams to allow international students, who have studied in Nova Scotia and obtained their education credentials here to be allowed to apply for permanent residency (**Lead:** Office of Immigration)
- work with professional associations and regulatory bodies to develop pathways and procedures for the recognition of international credentials and qualifications to assist immigrants before they come to Nova Scotia; this will help them to understand the process that must be undertaken to be licensed to practise their professions so they can begin the process before their arrival (**Lead:** Office of Immigration)
- complete the Investment Prospectus Development study of industry capital investment/new producers and identify new investment promotion initiatives (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries)
- work to bring the first group of students from Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University to Nova Scotia and enroll in classes at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (**Lead:** Agriculture and Fisheries, Nova Scotia Agricultural College; **Partners:** Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University)

Objective 6: Design and implement labour policy to promote safe and healthy work environments, fair employment standards, and stable labour-management relations

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- researching issues pertaining to women and disabilities within the Nova Scotia labour market (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- supporting on-farm project activities that promote a safe and healthy working environment under the Regulatory Compliance Food and Farm Safety element of the Farm Investment Fund (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries)
- educating farmers, farm families, and farm employees on safe work procedures and information to reduce the number of injuries during day-to-day farm operations through the Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partner:** Canadian Agriculture Safety Association)
- promoting adaptation of farm health and safety best practices through workshops and training courses to ensure that the farm labour force is properly trained to complete their job tasks with the highest possible standards (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partners:** Canadian 4-H Council, Canadian Agricultural Safety Association, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, Department of Education, Department of Environment and Labour, Department of Transportation and Public Works, Nova Scotia 4-H Council, Nova Scotia Agriculture Awareness Committee, Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Atlantic universities, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, Agri-Business Sector, AgraPoint International Inc., Eastern Breeders Incorporated)
- continuing to provide input on government policy through the Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee to ensure that the farming community is able to comply with government legislation that affects their workplace and the completion of their daily job tasks efficiently and effectively without injury or incident (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partners:** 4-H and rural organizations, Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Resource Stewardship Agriculture Resource Co-ordinators, Department of Environment and Labour - Occupational Health and Safety Division, Department of Transportation and Public Works, Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)
- promoting continuous improvement in the quality, coherence, and effectiveness of regulatory systems that protect the public interest and support sustainable economic competitiveness (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour)
- promoting safe and healthy workplaces/work practices and safe facilities and equipment (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour)
- promoting employment standards, fair processes for wage compensation, effective labour-management relations, and fairness for injured workers (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour)
- reviewing and identifying new policies to build safe and healthy workplaces for provincial employees (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)

New Actions

- develop an initiative whose aim is to increase the volume of entrepreneurs in technology and exports, in partnership with Dalhousie University (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partner:** Dalhousie University)
- participate in the development of an economic strategy for persons with disabilities and ensure the inclusion of women in that strategy (**Lead:** Disabled Persons Commission, **Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, various others)
- update *Standards of Practice and Risk Management Tool for Farmers* and update *Protect Yourself from Livestock Injuries* (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, **Partner:** Canadian Agriculture Safety Association)
- provide financial assistance to the Farm Family Stress Line and Support Centre to ensure that it meets the needs of farm community clients and promotes its services to farmers (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partners:** Canadian 4-H Council, Canadian Agricultural Safety Association, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, Department of Education, Department of Environment and Labour, Department of Transportation and Public Works, Nova Scotia 4-H Council, Nova Scotia Agriculture Awareness Committee, Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Atlantic universities, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, AgraPoint International Inc., Eastern Breeders Incorporated)
- implement a multi-year Competitiveness and Compliance initiative designed to enhance the Department of Environment and Labour's capacity to contribute to a positive business climate in Nova Scotia, and deliver effective protection for workplace and public safety, the environment, and consumers (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour)
- improve the overall safety of Nova Scotia's workers through an integrated workplace safety strategy that combines effective initiatives on accident prevention and education, improves compliance with existing laws and regulations, and encourages development and refinement of occupational health and safety regulatory and non-regulatory instruments (**Lead:** Workers' Compensation Board; **Partners:** Department of Environment and Labour, Department of Justice)
- implement decisions resulting from the Minimum Wage Review Committee's report and the subsequent response from the Minister of Environment and Labour (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour)
- develop and implement a strategy for interdepartmental co-operation on trade certification, certification renewal, and occupational licensing (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour; **Partner:** Department of Education)
- promote a healthy workplace initiative that will (1) promote good individual health practices; (2) focus on promoting a workplace culture that values a work-life balance and has zero tolerance for violence in the workplace; and (3) provides a safe work environment by going beyond compliance and focussing on air quality and appropriate ergonomics (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)

Objective 7: Improve opportunities for youth to develop the leadership skills required for successful labour market participation

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- advancing Open for Business, a province-wide youth initiative that introduces entrepreneurship and business skills to youth (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Youth Secretariat, Department of Education, other provincial departments)
- continuing to advance the Junior Achievement Youth initiative across the province and developing a proposal to introduce the initiative in mainland First Nation schools (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Office of Economic Development, Department of Education, other provincial departments)
- recognizing leadership credentials such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award for credit toward graduation (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Duke of Edinburgh's Award - Young Canadian Challenge)
- producing learning resources and recommending program components for the Youth Apprenticeship program (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resource Sector Councils, industry, Nova Scotia Community College, school boards)
- finalizing the development of the Nova Scotia Youth Employment and Skills Development Strategy and Action Plan to provide direction for the provincial government in assisting young Nova Scotians to make a meaningful connection to the labour market (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Office of Economic Development, other government departments)
- continuing partnership with the HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development to enable more young Nova Scotians to gain the leadership skills required for labour market and community participation (**Partners:** Youth Secretariat, Department of Community Services, Department of Education)
- continuing the development of two YouthBuild projects to help out-of-school youth build the academic, employability, and workplace skills necessary to return to education and training or to pursue employment in the skilled trades (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- providing investment to youth organizations involved in skill development, such as the Halifax Dance Young Company and Nova Scotia Youth Orchestra (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- continuing to offer skills development opportunities to youth in care, dependents, and direct recipients of income assistance through the Youth Development Initiative (**Lead:** Department of Community Services)
- continuing to build on opportunities for high school students to make successful transitions to college learning through Nova Scotia Community College's College Prep program (**Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Department of Education)

New Actions

- develop a *Guide for Girls*, which is a resource book for teenage girls that covers a series of topics including financial management, relationships, healthy choices, body image, keeping a journal, and finding your passion (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Hypatia Association, Phoenix House, Antigonish Women's Resource Centre, Nova Scotia Community College, IWK Health Centre)
- recognize youth leadership opportunities at school and in the community by promoting volunteering, service learning, and community service and by supporting student participation in leadership skills development programs (**Lead:** Department of Education **Partners:** School boards)
- expand youth leadership and development programs for African Nova Scotian learners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Council on African Canadian Education, school boards)
- implement the Nova Scotia Youth Employment and Skills Development Strategy (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Office of Economic Development)
- implement a revised Youth Development Initiative that will provide skills development and employment opportunities for recipients of income assistance (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Community-based organizations)
- develop the Nova Scotia GoverNEXT initiative whose mission is to contribute to the future of the provincial public service by providing a voice for youth in the renewal of the public service and by promoting a workplace that is diverse, rewarding, and collaborative. (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour; **Partner:** Public Service Commission)
- implement the Applied Networking Technology articulation program where high school students from across Nova Scotia can obtain credit towards the Nova Scotia Community College Information Technology Diploma as well as advanced Cisco Academy credentials (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, school boards)

Goal 2: Provide better labour market access and supports to Nova Scotians

Objective 1: Provide career- and employment-related services to Nova Scotians to help them develop their skills and find sustainable jobs

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- continuing to develop a co-ordinated continuum of career development through the Nova Scotia Career Development Initiative, including a menu of services and standards and guidelines for career practitioners in conjunction with the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework Labour Market Attachment Task Team (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- expanding and upgrading the Career Options website, handbook, and accompanying teacher's resource for grade 9, which are career and labour market information products (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- developing a new teachers' resource for a career awareness component of Career and Life Management 11 (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- distributing *Career Planning: A Website Guide* for career practitioners as a tie-in to other career websites (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- publishing and distributing a career planning guide for out-of-school adults (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- continuing to host the annual Job Fair at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College with an emphasis on emerging job opportunities in agriculture, environmental science and management, and land and natural resource management (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Nova Scotia Agricultural College; **Partner:** Skills Canada)
- implementing the Canadian Agricultural Skill Service federal/provincial program to help farmers and their spouses increase family income on or off the farm by providing them with assistance for skills development and access to training in areas such as business management, accounting, finance, human resource management, and training for other employment or for starting a new business (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partner:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- promoting the benefits of an agricultural career through workshops, tours, and an affiliation with the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Agricultural College.)

- developing and delivering comprehensive educational Agriculture Awareness and Agriculture in the Classroom programs, which improve students' awareness of the Nova Scotia agriculture industry to help them make educated decisions about food choices and career choices in agriculture; this includes the grade 11 Agriculture/Agri-Foods course, as well as public awareness programs like Ag Zone and the Nova Scotia Museum program (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Department of Education, Maritime Fall Fair, Agriculture and Agrifood Canada, Nova Scotia Agricultural College)
- supporting the work of the Provincial Nursing Network, Rural and Remote Working Group, which examines nursing recruitment and retention in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Employers)
- creating employment opportunities for Aboriginal students, racially visible students, students with disabilities, and female students pursuing studies in non-traditional areas through a Summer Employment Diversity Initiative and a Summer Female Mentorship Program (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- improving policies and practices that help manage, recognize, and reward the performance of public servants who have contributed to government's goals and priorities (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- providing recent post-secondary graduates with an opportunity to work with the Province of Nova Scotia in the areas of finance, information technology, human resources, policy, communications, or engineering and gain valuable experience for up to two years through a Post-Secondary Internship Program (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- implementing tools that support the succession management process as outlined in the Public Service Commission's *Guide to Succession Management* (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- providing government employees with opportunities to accelerate development and learning that is focussed on portable skills and leadership competencies through the Leadership Continuity Program and the Career Assignment Program (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- offering career and job development services to eligible income assistance recipients for participating in employability-enhancing activities (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Work Activity Centres, Services to Persons with Disabilities, Services to African Nova Scotians and Aboriginal Persons, Women's Employment, other advocacy groups)
- continuing to offer the Employment Development Program, a work-based training program designed to provide workplace learning opportunities and foundations for long-term employment; this program is targeted to individuals facing significant barriers to obtaining sustainable employment (**Lead:** Department of Community Services)
- supporting career planning services for students, employees, and clients of the Nova Scotia Community College (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)

New Actions

- provide professional development opportunities to career practitioners (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- develop and pilot parent information workshops to help parents better support their children's career planning (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- develop print and web-based versions of *Career Planning: a Website Guide* for use in schools (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- develop a guide to help employers provide better co-operative work experiences for students (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Employers, institutions offering co-op programs)
- discuss and develop career awareness initiatives through the Career Awareness Strategy Group, a partnership between the Department of Education, educators, and business/industry associations to better meet the career information needs of students in the public school system (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia School Counsellors' Association, Nova Scotia Teachers' Union, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Nova Scotia Community College)
- support the National Integrated Delivery Strategy (NIDS) project, which will ensure access to career information products for a number of audiences (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- rebuild and relaunch the WorkInfoNet website, which includes 7000 career information links and was formerly hosted by Nova Scotia Career Development Association (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- promote public education to improve Nova Scotians' awareness of energy-related occupations and career opportunities (**Lead:** Department of Energy)
- participate in the Skills on Demand trade show in spring 2005 and promote technical programs available at Nova Scotia Agricultural College (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Nova Scotia Agricultural College)
- initiate implementation of the Rural and Remote Nursing Recruitment and Retention in Nova Scotia initiative (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Employers)

Objective 2: Assist low income Nova Scotians, including income assistance recipients, to access education and training

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- providing access to education and training for income assistance and employment income recipients through the Canada/Nova Scotia Skill Development Agreement (**Lead:** Department of Education, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada; **Partners:** Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia Community College, Université Sainte-Anne)
- providing free access to education materials that are at an appropriate readability level, through the Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, to ensure that materials are accessible by all Nova Scotians, regardless of income or education level (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture)

- working on the One Journey - Work and Learn project, a labour market attachment project partnering with industry that combines essential skills training and specific industry skills training that leads to guaranteed employment upon successful completion (**Lead:** Department of Education, Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Nova Scotia business and industry)
- offering the Educate to Work program to provide opportunities for income assistance recipients to attend Nova Scotia Community College and Université Sainte-Anne (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Department of Education, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- supporting income assistance recipients in accessing literacy and academic upgrading programs through the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** Department of Education)
- administering the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Program and the Canada Student Assistance Program to serve approximately 18,000 Nova Scotian post-secondary students per year (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- continuing to provide the Debt Reduction Program as part of the Nova Scotia Student Loan Program, which reduces debt levels for those students who successfully complete their programs of study and provides further debt reduction for those students who then work in Nova Scotia and/or repay their student loans in a responsible fashion (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- delivering value-added services to more than 1000 students sponsored annually for studies through Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Department of Community Services, and disability supports programs, ensuring successful completion of studies and sustainable employment above regional labour force participation and employment rates (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Department of Community Services)

New Actions

- monitor provincial initiatives to foster participation in post-secondary education by women on income assistance (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Federal-provincial-territorial colleagues)
- disseminate copies of *Building Transitions to Good Jobs for Low-Income Women* and strategically communicate recommendations on access issues and best practice in transition to employment programs for low-income women in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- ensure that farm safety publications are at an accessible reading level for all Nova Scotians (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture)
- work with federal partners on a proposed new grant for first-time students from low-income families, which will be funded through the Canada Student Loan Program and administered through the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Office. In addition, proposed increases to loan limits, changes to parental contribution formulae, and the introduction of computer allowances will provide a greater level of assistance to a greater number of students (**Lead:** Department of Education)

Objective 3: Promote equity, fairness, and diversity throughout labour market programs and services offered in Nova Scotia

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- continuing to support the Black Business Initiative's business skills training activities, including the Business is Jammin' Program, to encourage youth entrepreneurship (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Various provincial departments)
- delivering Mi'kmaq Quest, and entrepreneurship skills training program for Aboriginal youth (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Office of Economic Development, other provincial departments)
- establishing a committee and beginning the planning for an Aboriginal Youth Business Summit for fall 2005 (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Office of Economic Development, other provincial departments)
- supporting Techsploration, a school-based career exploration initiative for grade 9 girls that provides exposure to non-traditional occupations in trades and technology (**Lead:** Department of Education, Nova Scotia Community College, Women in Trades and Technology; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, various others)
- supporting groups such as Hypatia Association and the Women for Economic Equality Society to promote women's access to education, training, and labour market activity (**Lead:** Hypatia Association, Women for Economic Equality Society; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Department of Education, Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Nova Scotia Community College)
- promoting collaboration and information sharing between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders on issues affecting women in the labour market through the Nova Scotia Advisory Council Round Table on Women's Economic Security (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, **Partners:** Department of Education, Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, United Way, Women for Economic Equality Society, Hypatia Association, Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Health Canada, Department of Health, Women's Employment Outreach, YWCA, Feminist Just and Equitable Public Policy, Women's Centres Connect, Transitions House Association of Nova Scotia, various others)
- providing targeted funding to support adult literacy and essential skills for the Acadian, African-Canadian, Mi'kmaq, and deaf communities (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Équipe d'alphabétisation-Nouvelle-Écosse, Deaf Literacy Nova Scotia Association, Literacy Network Unama'ki, Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre, Preston Area Learning Skills Society, Provincial Black Literacy Network)

- ensuring fair, equitable, and diverse recruitment, development, and retention of staff through human resource policy, programs, and services such as
  - employment education and counselling services
  - Affirmative Action Policy
  - Fair Hiring Policy
  - Sexual Harassment and No Discrimination Policy
  - HIV/AIDS in the Workplace Policy
  - Government Sign Language Interpreter Services Policy

  (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- providing support and employment-related services to disadvantaged groups, including single parents, persons with disabilities, and Aboriginal people (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Other government and community-based organizations)
- advancing the Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative, which will enhance the labour market participation of Aboriginal people through a collaborative and integrated approach such as the memorandum of understanding with the Government of Canada, the Mi'kmaq, and Michelin North America (Canada) (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Michelin North America (Canada), Mi'kmaq community)
- developing a Youth Apprenticeship program for under-represented groups (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Maritime Forces Atlantic, organizations of under-represented groups, Nova Scotia Community College Career and Transition Services)
- continuing to develop a strategy to increase under-represented groups within Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development's staff and client base (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- continuing to work with federal, provincial, and territorial partners through the Forum of Labour Market Ministers to address labour market programs and services for equity groups (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- assessing campus-based services for students with disabilities for the purpose of enhancing and improving delivery of goods and services (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- supporting post-secondary institutions in the delivery of services for students with disabilities (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- negotiating new agreements with post-secondary institutions that will require each institution to develop a multi-year accessibility plan to support the delivery of goods and services for students with disabilities (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

- identifying and implementing strategies to assist students with disabilities with the transition from the public education system to post-secondary institutions (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- supporting the development of targeted programs and services in post-secondary institutions to encourage the participation of students with disabilities, Aboriginals, African-Canadians, and women in trades and technology programs (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

New Actions

- develop and adapt gender and diversity analysis approaches and tools for use in labour force development work (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- support the development of a strategy to recruit, prepare, support, and employ women in areas of science, trades, and technologies (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Hypatia Association, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- tabulate the findings and release the final report of the provincial public service hiring audit that was held in 2004–2005 (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- develop a Valuing Diversity Action Plan (**Lead:** Public Service Commission, **Partners:** All government departments)
- create a Diversity Round Table that will drive the corporate diversity initiative (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- provide support and guidance to provincial government departments, agencies, boards, and commissions to develop and review three-year affirmative action plans (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- work with businesses, labour unions, and professional associations to promote the benefits of hiring a diverse and multicultural workforce, including our existing populations and new immigrants (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partners:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Office of Acadian Affairs)
- work with the Mi'kmaq, the Government of Canada, and employers to identify opportunities to expand the Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Mi'kmaq community)
- identify opportunities for Aboriginal organizations and provincial and federal governments to work collaboratively towards an Aboriginal Labour Market Strategy, which will include identifying and addressing gaps in labour market programs and services available to Aboriginal people (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Department of Education, Tri-Partite Forum)
- develop a communications strategy designed to create better awareness of goods and services offered and funded through Rehabilitation Programs and Services (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

- redesign the Rehabilitation Programs and Services Performance Based Grant program in consultation with community stakeholders (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- work with federal partners to propose new access grants for students with permanent disabilities, which will be funded through the Canada Student Loan Program and administered through the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Office (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

Objective 4: Develop and implement prior learning assessment and recognition processes and tools

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- continuing to collaborate with various industry groups to provide advice and guidance in the areas of the practice and promotion of prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR). (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Health Care Human Resource Sector Council)
- continuing the review process for the recognition of additional post-secondary credits as elective credits towards the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adult (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- developing training programs for service providers to increase the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning's capacity regarding prior learning assessment and recognition (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- researching with other jurisdictions to identify joint projects for essential skills and developing transferable skills assessment for apprenticeable trades (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Apprenticeship offices in Manitoba and British Columbia, Canadian Apprenticeship Forum)
- working with the Health Care Human Resources Sector Council to develop an action plan to address recruitment and retention issues with the continuing care assistants in both long-term care and home care environments (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Employers, Nova Scotia Community College)
- supporting implementation of the PLAR policy and procedures that provide an additional pathway to acquire the Continuing Care Assistant designation (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Employers, Nova Scotia Community College)
- working with the Prior Learning Assessment Centre to provide career and life portfolio programming to recipients of income assistance (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** Prior Learning Assessment Centre)
- working on the development of a workbook to assist the Department of Community Services career practitioners with a model based on PLAR that would assist them in determining evidence of competencies in relation to the National Standards and Guidelines for Career Practitioners (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** Prior Learning Assessment Centre)

- delivering PLAR training to Department of Community Services staff through the Career Theory Program and the Career Practitioner Certificate Program, which will result in staff being trained to determine evidence of the competencies of their clients (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** Prior Learning Assessment Centre)
- encouraging the Nova Scotia Community College to continue its development of accessible programs supporting the following activities:
  - reviewing PLAR processes with a goal of enhancing and expanding services available to students
  - integrating PLAR concepts and practices into academic advising services
  - creating the concept of a prior learning assessment community in the Digby area in partnership with the Prior Learning Assessment Centre

  (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Prior Learning Assessment Centre)

New Actions

- develop the Challenge for Credit process for Physically Active Lifestyles 11 and Physical Education 10 based on a commitment to and documentation of physical activity in the community (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, intergovernmental partners)
- develop and implement apprenticeship PLAR and transfer of credit policy (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- initiate a prior learning assessment and recognition initiative that will develop a framework for the systematic approach to the recognition of learning gained through formal, non-formal, and informal mechanisms (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Various partners)
- work with industry to produce a practice guide to assist business and industry to incorporate PLAR approaches within their sectors (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Industry sector councils, other partners)
- implement the compulsory Continuing Care Assistant designation for entry to practice (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Employers, Nova Scotia Community College)
- work with the post-secondary education institutions to establish a written agreement on the transfer of credits among universities and between universities and community colleges, based on the memorandum of understanding between the province and the universities, signed in December 2004 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

Goal 3: Strengthen Nova Scotia's system of lifelong learning opportunities

Objective 1: Increase the opportunities for Nova Scotia's children to develop a curiosity for learning and an ability to learn before entering Nova Scotia's education system

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- participating in the YWCA of Halifax task force on Early Childhood Learning and Care (ECLC) to develop a model for ECLC for Halifax (**Lead:** YWCA; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, various others)
- developing plans for a forum in 2005 on the role of Nova Scotian women in the family and policies that affect them, including policies related to early childhood learning and care (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Round Table on Women's Economic Security, United Way, Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Healthy Balance, Canadian Council on Social Development)
- co-ordinating the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund, which funds projects to support parent/child literacy through a partnership with the Halifax Youth Foundation and the Department of Education (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Halifax Youth Foundation, National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- supporting the Family Literacy Advisory Group for Nova Scotia to develop an action plan for family literacy in the province (**Lead:** Department of Education, Colchester East-Hants Library; **Partners:** Regional libraries, community groups, Department of Community Services, school boards, Read to Me!, Literacy Nova Scotia)
- supporting the Francophone Family Literacy Committee in implementing its action plan for the Acadian community through the second year of a four-year nationally funded initiative (**Lead:** Équipe d'alphabétisation; **Partners:** Department of Education, Conseil scolaire acadian provincial, Fédération des parents acadiens, other Francophone partners)
- supporting the Read to Me!/Lis-moi une histoire program, which provides reading materials to English- and French-speaking parents of every newborn baby in the province (**Lead:** Read to Me! Board, which includes Department of Education, Department of Health, IWK Health Centre, Halifax Youth Foundation)
- providing story times for infants, toddlers, and preschool children at all public libraries in the province (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- providing opportunities to support co-operative students to gain apprenticeable hours and experience while gaining high school credits (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Provincial school boards, employers)
- encouraging learning in archaeology, biology, culture, geology, heritage, and palaeontology through delivery of a comprehensive program of curriculum-linked school classes through the Nova Scotia Museum (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

- supporting curriculum-based education through the delivery of the School Kits Program, through which education kits of museum artifacts, specimens, and teaching materials are loaned to teachers, schools, and other educational groups (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- offering summer reading programs in 77 public library locations (**Lead:** Department of Education)

New Actions

- initiate the Pre-Primary Program pilot in up to 20 sites in areas where access to day care is limited and where school space is available; curriculum will be based on early childhood development principles and will emphasize activities and socialization skills (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Office of Health Promotion, Department of Health, Department of Community Services, Mount Saint Vincent University, Nova Scotia Community College)
- initiate family literacy pilot projects that enhance the role that parents can play in helping their children suceed in school (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, libraries, community groups)
- participate, in the summer of 2005, in the national TD Summer Reading Club with all Nova Scotia regional libraries (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** TD Bank)

Objective 2: Improve the core skills of children in Nova Scotia's education system

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- implementing the Class Size initiative, the Literacy Success initiative, and the Mathematics Strategy in schools across the province (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- working collaboratively at a national level for a first ministers meeting on Aboriginal issues and at a local level through the Tripartite Forum to improve the educational outcomes of Mi'kmaq learners in Nova Scotia both within the public school system and through the Mi'kmaq Kina'matneway (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Federal government, other partners, national and local Aboriginal organizations, Mi'kmaq, Tri-Partite Forum)
- investing in programs delivered by professional artists in schools, including programs such as Arts Smarts, Professional Artists in the Schools (PAINTS), and Writers in the Schools (WITS) (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing skill development programs to increase communication, evaluation, and entrepreneurship skills of 4-H participants (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Department of Education, Maritime Fall Fair, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, Nova Scotia Agricultural College)

New Actions

- expand the Class Size initiative to cap grade 2 classes at 23 students as of September 2005; in addition, combined grades primary to 1 classes will have a maximum of 20 students or an additional non-teaching adult in the classroom (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** School boards)
- develop a new grade primary program guide (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** School boards)
- introduce *Teachers in Action: Reading and Writing in Primary to 3* (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- provide classroom resources to support the writing program in grades 1 to 3 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- expand the early intervention Reading Recovery program to continue to increase accessibility for grade 1 students (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- support implementation of Active Young Readers/Jeunes lecteurs actifs grades 4 to 6 with a focus on effective classroom assessment strategies and increased support for struggling readers (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- support implementation of Active Readers/Lecteurs actifs grades 7 to 9, by implementing the *Active Readers Assessment Resource for Young Adolescents*, providing additional learning resources for students, and conducting a professional development workshop for more than 100 lead teachers (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- support implementation of Writers in Action/Écrivains à l'oeuvre grades 4 to 6 with a focus on effective classroom assessment strategies and increased support for struggling writers (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- implement Writers in Action 7 and Écrivains à l'oeuvre 7 à 9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- provide targeted funding for learners in grades 7 and 8 who are struggling with reading and/or writing (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- provide training and funding for more literacy mentors for grades primary to 9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- develop *Écrivains à l'oeuvre 10* and implement *Writers in Action 10*, including the provision of professional resources for teachers and a professional development workshop for lead teachers (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- begin implementation of English 10 Plus, a new 220-hour course option, including the provision of resources for students and professional development for teachers (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- pilot alternative delivery methods for Core French, field test a classroom resource to assess grade 9 immersion students' French language skills, and provide more learning resources to support implementation of French second language (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** School boards)
- begin implementation of new Atlantic Canada curriculum for social studies grades primary to 3 and grade 7 in English and French (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

- begin implementation of new Atlantic Canada curriculum for Science 4 and support implementation of Science 3 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- introduce new mathematics classroom assessment resources for grades primary to 3 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- implement *MathLinks Primary to 3* (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- provide targeted funding for mathematics mentors and for the professional development of mathematics teachers and school-based math leaders, grades primary to 9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- provide new mathematics textbooks and teacher resources for grade 4 and grade 9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- assist school boards in providing site-based mathematics professional development for teachers of grades primary to 9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- provide training and funding for more math mentors for grades primary to 9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- implement Mathematics Essentials 10 and pilot Mathematics Essentials 11 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- identify opportunities for Aboriginal organizations and provincial and federal governments to work collaboratively towards an Aboriginal Labour Market Strategy, which will include identifying and addressing gaps in labour market programs and services available to Aboriginal people (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs)

Objective 3: Expand co-operative and work experience opportunities for students in Nova Scotia's secondary education system

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- providing significant opportunities under the Community Access Program (CAP) for students to access entry-level work placement opportunities throughout Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Department of Education, other provincial departments, Industry Canada)
- continuing student placements under the Co-operative Employment Program in partnership with universities and with Nova Scotia Community College (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, universities)
- promoting community-based education initiatives in school boards across the province (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- including work experience components in new career-related courses at the high school level (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- resuming work on a community-based education support document for schools (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

- continuing to offer a bursary at Dalhousie University Faculty of Engineering and one at the Nova Scotia Community College, through the Transportation and Public Works Planning for Progress: Employment Bursary Program (**Lead:** Department of Transportation and Public Works)
- providing work experiences that focus on broad topics such as cultural history, science, and marine history through work placements of high school students in museums and in provincial Visitor Information Centres (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

New Actions

- promote and recommend that co-operative and work experience opportunities for students include measures to expose girls and young women to careers in science, trades, and technology fields (**Lead:** Women for Economic Equality Society, Hypatia Association; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Department of Education, Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia Community College)

Objective 4: Increase the opportunities for Nova Scotians to access adult basic education

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- administering and co-ordinating the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL), which provides programs for adults seeking to improve their literacy and essential skills and/or acquire a high school diploma or the GED certificate (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia Community College, Université Sainte-Anne, school board adult high schools, community-based learning organizations)
- continuing a review of community-based adult literacy programs in Nova Scotia to develop a program delivery model that is effective, efficient, inclusive, and sustainable and working with community partners to address issues related to policies and guidelines, learner progress, and tutor training (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** community-based literacy organizations)
- reviewing and revising the Adult Learning Program's Career Skills Development Level IV curriculum to make it more relevant and applicable to the world of work (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- continuing to develop a professional development strategy that will provide information and training to adult education instructors regarding employability and essential skills training and their links to emerging trends in the world of work (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Université Sainte-Anne, school boards, community-based literacy organizations)
- continuing to provide opportunities for seniors to participate in senior-friendly learning programs (**Lead:** Senior Citizen's Secretariat; **Partners:** Department of Education, community learning networks, senior's organizations)
- working with the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning on referring individuals who require academic upgrading as part of essential skills development (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** Department of Education)

New Actions

- develop and implement a strategy to promote the implementation of measures such as transportation and child care support for single mothers seeking educational upgrading, particularly those not on income assistance as part of follow-up to *Building Transitions to Good Jobs for Low-Income Women* (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Members of the Round Table for Women's Economic Security)
- develop a proposal to access funding for a health literacy manual for older adults (**Lead:** Senior Citizens' Secretariat; **Partners:** Department of Education, Community Learning Networks, Seniors' organizations)
- work with Literacy Nova Scotia to support the provision of professional development for adult educators and the development of expertise to support board development with community learning organizations (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Literacy Nova Scotia)
- support regional planning teams, through the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning, to carry out regional workshops, conferences, and sessions to improve services for adult Nova Scotians and to improve informal and referral systems (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Department of Community Services, community-based literacy organizations, Nova Scotia Community College, school boards)
- work in consultation with the community-based literacy organizations to review and revise all courses in the Level II Adult Learning Program to better serve adult learners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Community-based literacy organizations)

Objective 5: Make education and training more relevant to the emerging skill needs of the learners and employers

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- implementing the Youth Pathways and Transitions initiative, including the introduction of the new career-related courses Agriculture/Agrifood 11, Business Mangement 12, and Food Science 12 (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, sector partners)
- continuing to develop new career-related and interactive technologies courses such as Health and Human Services 12 (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, sector partners)
- developing curriculum for new programs such as Water Resources Management, which will be delivered as a master's degree at Nova Scotia Agricultural College and has a target implementation date of September 2007 (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Nova Scotia Agricultural College)
- continuing to monitor the needs of current and prospective Nova Scotia Agricultural College students through the Enrolment Management Council (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Nova Scotia Agricultural College)
- annually evaluating the provincial government corporate training calendar to ensure that appropriate quality courses are provided to government employees (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)

- supporting the skill development of the current workforce through the award-winning Workplace Education initiative to assist employees with managing change brought on by a rapidly changing workplace (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Partners Committee, Nova Scotia business and labour)
- conducting organizational needs assessments for business and industry to identify workforce training needs and options for addressing those needs (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia business and labour)
- providing professional development and certification opportunities for Workplace Education instructors to customize essential skills programs to meet the needs of business, industry, and labour (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia)
- supporting a sector engagement program to facilitate sharing of labour market information and to develop customized responses to labour market challenges (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Association of Industry Sector Councils, provincial sector councils)
- providing trade-relevant essential skills learning options for apprentices and trade qualifiers to support their success in the Apprenticeship Training Program and with trade qualifications (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia)
- continuing to work with the Nova Scotia Community College to develop a process for supporting ongoing program review (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- providing advanced diploma programs for university and college graduates wanting to enhance their skills in preparation for employment (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- supporting more flexible learning opportunities at post-secondary institutions that respond to the changing needs of learners, such as part time, customized, and online learning (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)

New Actions

- develop the new career-related and interactive technologies courses Geomatics 12, Computer Programming 12, and Tourism 12 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, sector partners)
- pilot the new course Multimedia 12 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Community College)
- develop a marketing and communications plan for the new programs at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Nova Scotia Agricultural College)
- complete a needs assessment of the farm community to ensure that 4-H program resources meet their needs and are relevant to the skills they require to complete their daily job tasks (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture)

- pilot the Responsible Citizenship and Canada's Tax System learning unit in 15 to 25 schools across the province to teach what it means to be a responsible citizen and to increase awareness of how our tax system contributes to our society as a whole (**Lead:** Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations; **Partners:** Department of Education, Canada Revenue Agency)
- resume and expand outreach programs designed to educate students with the range of skills used in jobs through efforts such as job fairs, departmental speakers bureaus, and open houses (**Lead:** Department of Transportation and Public Works)
- build a new learning management system for the provincial public service to improve methods of securing training and development programs and to provide an alternative route for education through e-learning (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- increase capacity to deliver occupational needs assessments for business (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia)
- support the implementation of the Department of Education's Options and Opportunities (O_2) initiative for high school students who plan to pursue trades and technology studies at post-secondary institutions (**Lead:** Department of Education)

Objective 6: Increase the post-secondary education and training system's capacity to respond to emerging labour market needs

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- encouraging the continuation of university-based development centres that expose students and the community to entrepreneurship development activities and techniques (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, universities)
- renewing the Entrepreneur Skills program in collaboration with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Dalhousie University, and Mount Saint Vincent University (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Dalhousie University, Mount Saint Vincent University)
- supporting groups such as Hypatia Association and the Women for Economic Equality Society in their work of improving the culture of educational institutions and workplaces to attract and retain women in science, trades, and technology occupations (**Partners:** Women in Science, Trades and Technology Working Group which includes Department of Education, Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Nova Scotia Community College, Hypatia Association, Women for Economic Equality Society)
- facilitating development of post-secondary graduate follow-up information to provide a better understanding of the labour market experiences of recent graduates (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- supporting programs that will provide students exposure to practical experiences within the oil sector (**Lead:** Department of Energy)

- continuing to work with the Nova Scotia Community College to supplement curriculum and teaching labs in programs related to the energy sector (**Lead:** Department of Energy; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- offering skill development enhancement and work experience opportunities to students attending private career colleges, community colleges, and universities through work-term placements in Visitor Information Centres (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing work experiences that focus on topics such as cultural history, practical business skills, marine history, science, and technology through work placements in museums (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing meaningful and applicable employment opportunities with the Province of Nova Scotia to post-secondary co-op students through the Co-operative Employment Program (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- increasing the capacity of the Nova Scotia Community College to approximately 10,000 seats through the $123-million development plan, which includes renovations at all existing campuses and the construction of a new metro campus (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- supporting graduate study programs by funding research (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust Fund, Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation)

New Action

- assist local companies in hiring Nova Scotian post-secondary students in career-related summer and co-op work terms through the Energy Training Program for Students (**Lead:** Department of Energy; **Partners:** Energy sector employers)

Objective 7: Promote lifelong learning through the development of a learning culture

Highlights of Activities Under Way

- implementing the Time to Learn strategy, which emphasizes the importance of effective use of instructional time available in the school day (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- administering elementary literacy assessment to grade 6 students and providing individual student results to parents (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** School boards)
- organizing, participating in, and supporting annual celebratory events, including International Family Literacy Day, Peter Gzowski Invitational (PGI) Golf Tournament, International Literacy Day, International Adult Learners' Week, and Word on the Street (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Various)
- promoting workplace learning as a primary strategy for addressing the skills requirements of our workforce (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** Business, labour, chambers of commerce, NovaKnowledge)
- promoting the benefits of human resource development, employment equity, lifelong learning, and best practices guidelines (**Lead:** Department of Education, **Partners:** Employers)

- promoting lifelong learning opportunities for seniors in the *Programs for Seniors* directory (**Lead:** Senior Citizens' Secretariat)
- continuing to implement a lunch 'n' learn program and expanding the program to field offices across the province (**Lead:** Department of Transportation and Public Works)
- promoting educational resources and opportunities by increasing the accessibility of provincial and community heritage resources and genealogical information available online through the Nova Scotia Museum and Public Archives (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- encouraging an interest in archaeology, biology, culture, geology, heritage, and palaeontology by providing a comprehensive schedule of interpretive programs and exhibits specific to Nova Scotia through the Nova Scotia Museum (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- supporting recipients of income assistance to develop learning plans designed to promote labour market attachment (**Lead:** Department of Community Services)

New Actions

- implement anti-bullying initiatives such as the Positive and Effective Behavioural Support initiative, including the *School Code of Conduct Guidelines* and *Meeting Behaviour Challenges: Creating Safe and Caring Learning Environments* (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- provide information and materials for parents to support their children's literacy and mathematics learning in the early years (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- launch an interactive website to provide parents with information on public school programs and services and expectations for student learning and achievement at different grade levels (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- introduce the first Council of the Federation Literacy Award to an outstanding adult literacy learner in the province (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Council of the Federation)
- promote health literacy initiatives that raise awareness of the role of that literacy plays in the ability of Nova Scotians to access and understand health care information and to successfully navigate the health care system through activities such as launching a Health Literacy Awareness Initiative that targets primary health care providers; publishing a Health Literacy edition of the East Coast Reader, a plain language newspaper for literacy and ESL learners; and exploring ways that health literacy can be incorporated into Adult Learning Program Level II curriculum revisions (**Lead:** Department of Health, Department of Education)
- develop training and resource materials to promote the culture of continual learning and updating of skills among farmers, farm families, and farm employees (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partners:** 4-H and rural organizations-Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Resource Stewardship Agriculture Resource Co-ordinators)

- investigate the development of an organizational audit and human resource planning tool kit for workplaces that participate in Workplace Education programs (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- support lifelong learning in the provincial government by working towards becoming a learning organization through a learning strategy and through the service excellence goal, which encourages employees to further contribute to corporate goals (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)

Conclusion

The *Skills Nova Scotia Action Plan 2005–2006* builds on the work of previous years to develop the skills, supports, and systems required to respond to immediate skill needs of the labour market and to plan for future needs. The province is continuing to work with its partners to advance common labour market skill development priorities. By continuing to develop the new initiatives to deal with immediate skill requirements of industry such as boatbuilding and to create long-term strategies to attract and retain skilled immigrants, among others, Nova Scotia is building on the achievements of the past to create a world-class workforce that can meet the challenges of today and promise of tomorrow.